THE COMMONWEAL

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THE WAR FOR LIBERTY

WHILE it cannot be said that Pope Pius XI's latest encyclical letter is fundamentally of greater importance than the three notable utterances which have preceded it—the letters on Christian education, marriage, and economic conditions—nevertheless, because of special circumstances, the new letter on Catholic Action in Italy emphasizes with momentous force the world-wide crisis which confronts the Catholic Church, and not only the Catholic Church but also all forms of civilization which derive from Christian principles.

A bird's-eye view of some at least of the main problems which concern the Church and Christian civilization throughout the world will indicate how exceedingly serious the situation is. First of all, there is the exceptionally dangerous situation in Italy itself, where the Church has been abruptly and violently challenged by Mussolini with a demand that the supernatural, universal interests of the Church shall be subordinated to the national interests of the State. The Pope's own words put the matter most clearly, where he says that "the proposal has already, in great measure, actually been put into effect to completely monopolize the young, from their tenderest years up to manhood and womanhood, and later for the exclusive advantage of the party and the régime based on an idealogy which clearly resolves itself into a really pagan worship of the State, which is no less in contrast with the natural rights of the family than it is in contradiction with the supernatural rights of the Church."

In addition to this central crisis in Rome itself, the Catholic Church in Spain, and Spanish Catholics as individuals, are facing a most menacing and uncertain situation. In Lithuania, predominantly populated by faithful Catholics, but at present ruled by a dictatorial group of intense nationalists, there is also a crisis in the relations between the government and the Church; the Apostolic Nuncio having been recalled by the Vatican simultaneously, or nearly so, with the issuance of an order for his expulsion by the clique which has gained control of the government. After a period of comparative peace, Mexico is again in serious agitation, with at least two states—Vera Cruz and Tabasco—initiating repressive measures which Catholics needs must consider to be outright persecution, and which, if they are not restrained by the federal government, may throw the whole country back again into the terrible conditions which prevailed a few years ago.

All these problems, and many others that might be

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listed, are fundamentally but different aspects of the problem with which the Holy Father deals in his new letter. Without as yet explicitly condemning the Fascist government, the Holy Father draws the line which now, as in the past, and as in the future, marks the limit beyond which no earthly authority can be permitted to intrude. He says: "A conception of the State which claims that the young generation, without exception and from infancy to the attainment of adult status, should conform to it absolutely is not reconcilable for a Catholic with Catholic doctrine or with the natural rights of the family." Such a doctrine of State absolutism is already functioning in Russia. It has come to grips with the Church in Rome. It is testing its strength in many other parts of the world in addition to Spain, Mexico and Lithuania.

These great struggles are merely some of the more sensational, objective manifestations of the problems of the Church. There are many other subtler and less obvious problems and situations which nevertheless are scarcely less dangerous than the world-wide battle with the new paganism of the State. Everywhere throughout the world, the Catholic Church as an organization, and believing and practising Catholics as individuals, or as groups within the Church, must struggle unceasingly with the problems created by the religious, moral, economic and social disorder of the times. The struggle is a double one. The first, supremely important aspect is wholly spiritual—it is the struggle which the Church began nearly two thousand years ago and which it has never ceased, nor shall ever cease, to wage—the struggle to carry on the Church's mission to save human souls, to carry on Christ's work of redemption. The second aspect of the struggle is educational and cultural—it is the inspiring, the shaping and the guidance of the institutions of society, directed toward the primary purposes of religion, and, when so directed, inevitably bringing to mankind temporal blessings, peace and social security, and the spirit of the Founder of the Church, Who said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all other things shall be added unto you."

Positive action invariably provokes reaction. Whenever circumstances have forced the Church backward into merely negative action, the opposition toward her has also been weak. But when the Church moves forward creatively and vigorously, the everlasting war rages in fierce battles and great campaigns. We are now in the midst of such a campaign, and the commander-in-chief has issued a proclamation to the army of Christ. That army will move forward into action knowing that the victory is assured if it remains faithful to Christ. It is a war for the liberty of the human soul that now is being waged—and all other liberties depend upon that primary one. The onslaught made upon the Holy Father's position by the secular press of Italy after his encyclical appeared does not represent the views of the people of Italy—for the dictator of Fascism is in absolute control of the press. That onslaught will be of no avail. The Church will win.

WEEK BY WEEK

AFTER another week of tense debating, the world agrees with Mr. Hoover. Of course there had been progress toward an agreement between the governments of France and of the United States. But the average citizen, hoping fervently that the full impact of the Hoover idea upon business and world confidence might not be lost, was beginning to feel that each day something precious was evaporating. He found it hard to understand why the French thought of so many new varieties of reservations and conditions, or why—to take what is probably the major incident in the whole story—the plan itself was saved by Socialist support, normally refused to the Laval Cabinet. The latest stumbling-block was particularly baffling, since the French demand that international treasury experts, to whom the working out of the plan in its details is to be entrusted, be given autonomy in certain domains, seemed like quibbling for the letter when only the spirit counted. Perhaps the answer to all these matters is really very simple. The Hoover plan emerged when the bare and bleak realities of the international situation presented themselves in all their naked actuality to the government. Public opinion, however, had not been aware of these realities. Told for a decade (a) that Germany's capacity to pay was sufficient to meet the strain and (b) that credit and trade extension to Europe could go hand in hand with isolation, the public never realized either how precarious the situation had been or how difficult it would be to improve it.

It's Signed!

WE WERE paying the penalty for years of diplomatic inactivity and blind confidence in the natural working out of economic law. Money flowed to Germany because money goes where the highest return can be earned. In the flush of a reaction from war-time idealism, it was assumed that the most practical thing in the world—i.e., business push and optimistic judgment—would eventually right all things. Today we have learned the truth that high interest cannot be earned without adjacent products—rampant bankruptcy, inability to accumulate capital reserves, imperiled budgets, political anger, international hatred. The Frenchman had seen all these products before we have, and his alarm is understandable. Of course this alarm was in part artificial, a concoction brewed for nationalist political purposes, just as a portion of the German antipathy to the Young Plan is steam raised by propaganda. But apart from all this, it became evident that suffering and resentment were stiffening the German back, whereupon the French spine also atrophied. What, said the Parisian, we have been making concession after concession, under the sway of Briand, and the result is this? Keep the Germans poor, cooped up and hamstrung, or they may attack. Such is the psychological situation into which Mr. Hoover stepped, and out of which he

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could not hope to emerge with immediate and triumphant admiration on the part of all concerned. Idealism and mere economics, flouted alike, had to give way to a program of constructively legalized international justice. The United States and Great Britain have a rare opportunity to coöperate. Necessity has put them in the same boat; leadership has headed them for the same port. They have no right to expect only clear weather or smooth seas, and a good deal of their course lies over uncharted waters. But with perseverance they may round the most dangerous and most foolish cape in European politics—Franco-German opposition.

THE ZIONIST CONGRESS, in Basle, is still in session as this issue goes to press, and the outcome of some of its most important debates is thus still doubtful. Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the president of the world body for many years, is definitely retiring, and the problem of selecting his successor is the greatest single one which the congress faces. Dr. Weizmann is himself a British subject, and was largely instrumental in securing the formulation of the Balfour Declaration, but in spite of his long usefulness and undoubted dedication to the cause of Zionism, he has been the target of much criticism from the more radical members of his organization. His policy has been steadily to coöperate with the British government, and to conciliate Arab opinion; and as the former has seemed, to many Zionists, to temporize and hedge more and more about its obligations under the Declaration, while the Arabs, following the massacres of 1929, have grown more and more bold in their opposition to the Palestinian experiment, Dr. Weizmann has borne the brunt of the Zionist feeling of resentment. The criticism has largely crystallized into the group who call themselves Revisionists. It is hard to adjudicate between these groups. As we have said before in these pages, there is no doubt that Great Britain has substantially contracted her undertaking for Zionism since she made the Declaration; and there is just as little doubt that to stand by those undertakings literally has been impossible for her, as an embattled empire, with conflicting commitments. We wish the Zionists success in choosing a leader, or group of leaders, who will combine what is sound in Dr. Weizmann's patient conciliation, with what is just and forceful in Revisionism.

The Zionist Division

IN CONSIDERING the results of the elections in Spain, it is imperative to check the obvious facts which by themselves might indicate a sweeping success for the Moderate Republicans and the Socialists by other, less obvious facts which most of the newspaper reports ignore. First, it seems clear that there is no likelihood of King Alfonso's return, or of the setting up of a monarchist form of government under another head. Only five avowed monarchists were elected out of more than three hundred and fifty candidates. But it must be remembered that strenuous efforts were put forth by the régime in power to check all moves by the monarchists to organize politically, their meetings being proscribed and their press muzzled. Moreover, a large proportion of monarchists, realizing the futility of attempting to elect their own representatives, voted for Moderate Republicans. Avowed Communists did not elect any of their candidates, but this fact, while it tends to support the claims made by the régime in Madrid that Communism is more of a bogy than a present reality in Spain, should also be judged by other facts which amply prove that terroristic anarchism and syndicalism exist as a formidable force in Spain, even if the Russian form of Communism does not. The burning of the churches and convents and schools in Spain was a definitely organized conspiracy on the part of those elements. It was emphatically not the mere outburst of hoodlumism, or of the resentment of anti-clericals against Cardinal Segura's courageous and badly misrepresented defense of the Church. As a special correspondent of the Birmingham Post (England) pointed out, the government viewed with favor, or at least tolerated, an outburst which it hoped would strengthen its hands in its dictatorial dealings with the Church. It professed to be taken by surprise when the burning of the churches shocked the world, but it was very prompt and forceful in protecting the great bank in Madrid when that too was momentarily menaced. We sincerely hope that the Spanish people will arrive at a reasonable solution of their terrific difficulties; but the persecution of religion is not the path to such a solution.

Spain in Transit

PREVIOUS COMMONWEAL comment on the "Reading List" prepared by the Cardinal Hayes Literature Committee brought, as we are glad to learn, a host of inquiries. The idea of providing counsel for people who are themselves unable to wade through the literary output is good; the intelligence with which it is here being realized seems likewise highly commendable. A second list of sixty titles, just published, comprises the committee's choice of books issued during the last three months. No doubt, virtually every critic will like to stress some error of inclusion or exclusion; and we ourselves can't help wondering why the catalogue was stretched to sixty titles, if no better books than some of those included were available. But the reading list is most valuable as a tentative Catholic estimate of modern writing. It shows us, for instance, how great a dearth there is of high-class, readable fiction—the five novels mentioned are certainly mediocre enough. Nor are the departments of essay-writing and philosophy very much more fertile, if our list be correct. Both books named under the second heading are hardly more than summaries for academic use. Accordingly, for all the comparative riches unearthed in the domain of religious and biographical writing, one's conclusions anent the contem-

What Shall We Read?

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porary author might well be rather pessimistic. We should like to suggest that in the future the "Reading List" might profitably carry a department of public affairs. These—which range from aspects of peace to the trials of the farmer—ought not to be neglected, and especially now that a fine literature about them is steadily appearing.

Rule Britannia

THAT truly admirable faculty of the British Parliament for absorbing the inevitable nonsense of intransigent minorities with the dignity of some large and jet-bespangled lady, of the type of Her Majesty Victoria, should the latter be poked in the ribs by some insistent and rude person, recently received delicious trial. The praiseworthy part of it is that not only is the dignity of the government not impaired, but the mad person and his friends actually enjoy a kind of satisfaction from his having made his gesture, and the public is not disturbed at all, beyond a smile. Specifically, we have reference to the small riot created in the House of Commons by the Clydesiders —those lantern-jawed and unco serious Scotsmen— when one of their members was, for having insulted the Speaker, dragged from the room by six elderly attendants in evening dress. Mr. McGovern had put a question to the Secretary for Scotland about the imprisonment of lay preachers for holding meetings on Glasgow Green. The Secretary had replied that he was having an investigation instituted to determine whether there was any discrimination against these preachers in obtaining permits. McGovern, not satisfied, became abusive and insulting, calling upon himself the censure of the Speaker. This only aroused him to greater heights of rage. The sergeant-at-arms was finally invoked by a vote of the House to suspend the unruly member, and Sir Colin Keppel, in knee-breeches and tail coat and baldrics, advanced with his six elderly attendants in evening dress. McGovern was supported by John Beckett who last year created parliamentary history by trying to run out of the room with the Speaker's mace, and the scuffle ensued. When last reported, His Majesty's government was still intact, but the condition of the six elderly attendants was not disclosed.

Borrowing Enchantment

LITERATURE is the greatest of mysteries, at least when it is regarded from the production end. There exist at least half a million books, pamphlets, magazines and courses designed to tell the amateur exactly how to produce a masterpiece—but the stuff which comes to editorial desks is as bad as ever. Possibly there is help in the old adage that distance lends enchantment to the view. At least so we gather from a news letter sent out by the Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, which informs us that Mr. Tom Gill, author of "The Gay Bandit of the Border," has left his ranch in Arizona to put through a deal in cattle, after which he will retire to his typewriter in Washington, D. C. "He lives in Washington several months out of every year," the letter continues. "He explains that he comes East to write his Western stories. 'After all, when you're sitting on a cactus and it's hotter than hell, you can't idealize the country,' he says." We should think—hardly.

Note on Matrimony

A RECURRENT error among a certain class of unchristian, or at least unorthodox, thinkers has to do with the Church's teaching about sex and procreation. In view of the doctrine, first, that marriage is a sacrament, and secondly, that its consummation is an integral part of its sacramental character, one might suppose than an outsider of only moderate powers of logic would grasp that that consummation is not believed by Christians to be sinful. Yet a good many of them do not grasp it. The phrase, "the Immaculate Conception," has been, in particular, the focal point of this misunderstanding and error. It is confused with the Virgin Birth (probably because of the words in the Creed, "conceived by the Holy Ghost"), and is very likely to be triumphantly cited as proof that "you Catholics think that that is the only form of conception that is immaculate. The ordinary, human form you consider sinful." Every one of our readers, probably, has listened to this argument. Unless our memory is much at fault, so distinguished an intellectual as George Bernard Shaw employs it in one of his prefaces. It is, therefore, not a matter for wonder that to the somewhat less commanding mind of Judge Ben Lindsey, writing in the *Birth Control Review*, it should also seem sound. It is true that Judge Lindsey does not mention the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, nor the specifically Catholic position, but his error, for all of that, has precisely the same substance as if he did.

HE ATTACKS the sacramental theory of marriage. Those holding it, he says, hold the procreative act to be a "sin," even in marriage, for they teach that their children are "born in sin," which can only be cleansed by baptismal waters. Judge Lindsey is not very important in his own right, and since, after his long judicial experience, he makes statements of this nature without previously investigating the sources, it would be fair enough to leave him undisturbed in the company of his ludicrous mistake. But he has a considerable following, and most of them probably accept what he says without knowing enough even to suspect him. Therefore, in charity, we interpose, to tell Judge Lindsey and the editors of the *Birth Control Review* what it is disgraceful that they have not ascertained themselves. We cannot speak for all professing Christians, and it is possible that individuals here and there may be tainted with the form of Manichaeism which Judge Lindsey affirms is universal. But we can speak for the preponderant body of Christians, who set the norm of orthodox Christianity. Catholics hold that the

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marriage relation is holy, and the procreation of children specially blessed. They do not, therefore, believe that the sin to which all men are born, is the sin of their procreation; they believe it is the inherited sin of the disobedience of the first parents of the human race, and hence they give it the name of original sin. To this we add, widening the scope of our correction in case it should catch the eye of Mr. Shaw, that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception applies, not to Our Lord's conception, but to Our Lady's: it means, not that she was not conceived by the human process, for she was, but that she was conceived without the guilt of that hereditary, original sin. No profound or esoteric researches are required to verify this. It is all in the children's catechism.

THE WILL TO WIN

BY INVITING comments from students on educational problems, the National Educational Association has probably not found a recipe for enriching pedagogical lore with mature advice but it has taken a step which may lead to good results. After all, student comment has long since been an important factor in college life. The administration judges professors largely on the basis of reactions from the benches; and the faculty itself, if at all human, gradually adjusts itself to youthful suggestion. What has been lacking heretofore is a frank and free colloquy on matters of equal importance to both sides. We hope for an extension of the National Educational Association idea and meanwhile think it helpful to add a few remarks of our own on what seems a basic assumption of American academic life.

Carried over into the educational field from the general educational environment, the adoption of the "win idea" on virtually all campuses has seemed as natural as a rain. Even Shakespeare is measured by the test of productive energy—made to explain just what he can do for a young man interested in getting on. A phrase never missing from alumni talks at the old school is, "When you buck up against the cold world." To the average student that world looks quite like a hard-boiled football team against which he, the intellectual half-back, will have to score a touchdown. Very early—often, indeed, before they arrive at Alma Mater—young people have sized up education as a kind of strategy, possessed of which a fellow can dash toward success faster than he could otherwise. Usually the college strengthens this opinion. It needs advertising and of course it needs money. Accordingly it strains every muscle in an effort to convince the public and itself that it can give what is demanded.

Now all this has undeniable value. Life today has immense areas in which the "win idea" is the supreme law. Salesmanship is an eminently useful form of employment; initiative and resolve are not to be scorned by anybody. The fact remains, however, that existence cannot be motivated as a whole by longing for victory. Why, for instance, should anybody wish to be successful? The answer is: in order to possess. But what? American youth as a whole remains alarmingly unable to formulate a reply to this query. It can enumerate a number of heart's desires—love, a family, a house, two cars, money in bank, the respect of others. Nevetherless, even these concrete things are vague to the great majority. Recently we asked a number of college students, picked at random, to state what form of the items enumerated would satisfy them. The responses were either so near the unattainable ideal as to be visionary, or else not definite at all. One young man retorted very emphatically that of course there was no limit to the amount of money he should like to have—or intended to get if he could. Naturally hardly anyone would admit the truth of what is here implied: that the point of importance is not the actual, definable objects to which success leads but rather the business of succeeding, for its own sake.

Beyond that, the "win idea" simply will not work in the higher reaches of life. Scholarship, for instance, cannot be motivated by success. Though fine minds will do things, hackwork, for bread and butter, every intellectual man worth his salt lives and is happy in the truth that he must have no other guide than devotion. Society and the state are wrecked by seekers after victory—the "office-holding class," which applies its energies to getting somewhere instead of to honorable, dauntless spending of the self in service. From the point of view of religion, the Saviour certainly made it absolutely plain that success was an element for which there was no room in the Kingdom of Heaven. It follows, then, that in so far as the colleges have given disproportionate emphasis to the "win idea," they have betrayed the most important causes they are expected to serve.

But the notion that an idealistic attack would do us much good is futile, indeed. Nine-tenths of our analysis of "what is the world coming to" splinters into bits on the fact that it has nothing to stress excepting the word "should." This word was never very effective; today it is useless. The human race has always acted because it had to or because it wanted to, and the pressure of "ought" has been just about nil. Men lead religious lives either because they fear God or because they love Him. Imagine an act of contrition which was a discourse on ethical obligation! And on a level nearer to terra firma we can get the college man—or more generally our youth—to escape from the overmastering dynamism of success and nearer to the same realism of devotion and service when we have proved to him neither is a dead-end avenue to physical and spiritual distress. When, for instance, we shall have managed to make public service something more than a plum on the end of a lot of wire-pulling, we may get keen, straight minds to think of it with some enthusiasm. As much holds true for a number of other fields of activity—social work, teaching, journalism, Catholic writing. But will we ever manage?

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ARE BIGGER BANKS BETTER?

By GEORGE A. HAVEN

A SUBJECT on which nearly everyone nowadays is either asking information or airing his own views, is the trend of present-day banking. It interests those who keep money in banks and those who borrow money from banks, and in one or the other of these classes nearly every person finds himself.

While all Canadian banks are branches of eleven great branch banking systems, the United States has been noted for its independent banks. The exception has been in California, where the Bank of Italy started its first branch in 1909. The Bank of America, as it is now called, has more than 350 branches, and together with 52 other branch banking systems, operates 863 of California's 1,290 banks. In New York and several other cities, large banks had operated branch offices, but they were few compared with the total number of banks. With the consolidations that have taken place of late in New York, many large banks were taken over and operated as branches of larger institutions until now $4,206,790,000 or 55 percent of New York state's banking resources is in the control of 17 banking systems.

Early in 1929 the "group" plan developed rather suddenly and for a few months grew amazingly. In Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, two metropolitan institutions gathered around them "key" banks in some of the leading cities and towns in the North Central states. Merely by acquiring a majority of the stock they gained control leaving the management intact in practically all cases. Groups sprang up almost simultaneously around ambitious banks in Detroit, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Louisville, Pittsburgh and a score of other cities, and the progress of the movement seemed unrestrained, until the historic stock market drop of September, 1929, when the public lost its enthusiasm for bank stocks, as for all others. Then the bancorporations, as many of them were called, settled back into an inactivity which was explained as a period when they were entrenching themselves, by unifying their numerous acquisitions and preparing for further inroads among the independents. The gain of the group idea has been somewhat checked by the later failure of the Louisville group, and branch banking had its set-back when a large New York institution closed its doors and those of its many branch offices.

The "chain" plan is not one that enters strongly into the present situation. Whereas the "group" banks are controlled by a parent holding corporation which operates the dominating big bank of the group as well, a "chain" is a series of banks, usually comparatively small, in which one or more individuals own a dominating stock interest. A decade or two ago several such "chains" were exploited by the controlling individuals to the ruin of their banks, which fell together as the result of dishonest manipulation. More thorough governmental supervision has minimized the evils of this plan, which has shown no tendency to make rapid advance.

The question that arises now in the minds of inquirers is: Are all independent banks threatened by the branch system or the group system, and if so, which? This question is one no man can answer. It will be answered by the banks of the country in the way they meet the present situation, and by the people of the nation according as they extend their support.

Craig B. Hazelwood, two years ago president of the American Bankers' Association, at its convention in Cleveland in October, 1930, said:

> The record of the American unit banking system not only proves that a poorly managed unit bank fails, but it also proves—a fact we have too frequently forgotten—that a soundly managed unit bank succeeds. I challenge the statement that the unit banking system has failed. It has not failed. It is not the system but the management that needs attention. We may analyze group banking and weigh carefully its possible advantages and disadvantages, and we shall find that it can justify itself only as it provides better management. Group, chain and branch banking do not represent any improvement over the unit banking system unless they provide, at the head office, management ability of a higher order than would be available in the independent units.

The banks of our country have, since 1920, been through fire and through water. It is the contention of some that they have been tried in the balance and found wanting. There is no doubt but that many have. Every possible weakness that could make a bank fail has developed and has caused one bank or a hundred banks to close. Many bankers gave their all, in substance and in energy, to save their banks, and failed. Some were no doubt competent men and were the victims of industrial depression or of continued crop failure. But with few exceptions there was a good banking reason why every bank failed. In a word it was a departure from the standards which experience has shown should always govern a bank. The cause was either carelessness in supervision or a wilful placing of desire for profit ahead of care for safety. The personal investor finds that safety goes with low return, insecurity accompanies a larger profit. The same principle applies in operating a bank. The good banker knows that over a long period he makes more with a low interest return on his investments because he keeps his losses at a minimum. Many a banker, particularly in the rural communities had to close the doors of his institution because he was too optimistic—he was overconfident in the ability of his territory to hold its own in the face of falling prices, deflating land values and the inevitable readjustment of the people to different standards of living. Or perhaps he lacked the fore-

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sight to realize that these difficulties were bound to follow the period of inflation that came after the war. But the careful student of banking knows that "wheat never goes up but that it goes down," he should foresee that disaster lurks for him who would disregard the experience of decades, and it is part of his business to know what effects will follow certain causes.

It would be a mistaken idea for anyone to believe that to be strong a bank must be large. All over the country, in suburbs, small cities, villages and hamlets can be found individual banks that hold the confidence of their communities and do it because they are managed with diligence, and in every way measure up to the standard of what a sound bank ought to be. These institutions either came through the troublous times untouched or, if tainted, "cleaned house" and so maintained their places of honor and respect. A bank is not weak because it is small. The bank of lesser size may have the same percentage of working capital, the same proportion of reserve, the same diversification of loans, the same rigid supervision, as its big city brother.

An outstanding advantage of the "community" bank, be it large or small, is the personal association of its officers with the clientele. Jack Robinson with limited resources may have better earning power and a greater determination to pay his debts than John Doe, who can make a better property statement and can list more assets. His neighbor the local banker knows this, and will make his loans to Jack and to John with those facts in mind. If their two statements are scanned by a strange banker in another town, he is not in a position to know the intimate facts that are so important in making a decision about the loans. Group banks, as thus far developed, keep their local management in the smaller affiliates and so retain that important personal touch. In a branch institution it is necessarily lost and the important criticism arises that the small borrower may not get the accommodation due him.

And yet there are obvious advantages that accrue to the branch and group plans. High-salaried and able executives can scrutinize the placing of loans and the purchase of investments, expert auditors can check the accounts and revise the methods of accounting and keeping records, costs of operation can be studied by specialists and reduced by rigid regulations, leakages can be stopped, buying can be centralized, new charges can be inaugurated, where the independent banker may see the need but lack courage to launch the innovation.

The independent banker, if he is alert, may in some ways meet these conditions and so keep his institution up to the standard set by the groups and branch institutions. The rigid requirements and high standards of the big banks stimulate the independents to greater endeavor and so all are helped.

An innovation that will be of value to the smaller independent banks in maintaining and raising their standards is the regional clearing-house. This, like the city clearing-house, is a group of banks banded together for their mutual good. They compare notes to see that borrowers are not duplicating their lines at neighboring banks, that a uniform and equitable rate of interest is paid on deposits, that charges are made for services to which a bank is entitled, but that the charges are fair to all concerned. Through such a medium the banks of a county or a group of counties can operate in harmony, eliminate cut-throat competition and work with a common mind, even as do the branch or group banks, though not so intimately bound together. By maintaining their separate entities independent banks will retain a feeling of kinship with the ordinary citizen to which he will respond more than he could to the dominating influence of a banking group.

The groups and branch banking institutions have made systematic efforts to distribute the stock of their holding companies among a large number of people, not only in their own territories but throughout the country, and while their efforts have been successful, no small proportion of the stockholders purchased stock not so much on account of loyalty to the corporation as in the hope of turning a profit by the transaction. Lack of marketability precludes trading in stocks of smaller country banks, and many such a stockholder has received his stock from his father and passed it on to his son. The trading value of a country bank's stock is sometimes entirely undetermined, so infrequently is its stock transferred, but the loyalty of such a stockholder in many cases is lifelong.

A study of the groups gives one the very definite notion that they are a means to an end. No one would venture to assert that a branch banking institution would ever develop into a group system, but it is not hard to foresee that eventually the group may develop into a branch system. The group is an experimental arrangement. A more direct management and economical administration attaches to the branch system. At present legislative obstacles restrict or prohibit branch banking in many states. Groups were not looked for nor thought of until they sprang up almost overnight. A group once formed, when permitted to do so by law, could easily be converted into a branch system.

With all the lessons that the surviving banks of the nation have learned from the panics of 1873 and 1893 and the deflation following 1920, with the rigid requirements that have been added and the stimulation to "better bank management" that has been advocated, there is no doubt but that the banks of the future will be better, stronger and bigger than heretofore.

This will come about whether they are dominated by a few great branch banking institutions, controlled by a few holding bancorporations, or remain free and independent banks. The American people have always had eventually what they wanted and they have chosen wisely. No groups or factions can long override the will of the people. With the people, as shown by their support and encouragement, rests the decision as to whether our banking system shall be a series of branching monopolies, of dominating groups, or of separate units typifying the spirit of American independence.

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THE FAIR

By HENRY WILLIAMSON

IT HAD stopped raining; but the day was "dirty." The roundabouts blared in the near distance; my Katerfelts riding coat hung damp and heavy on me. After an aimless prowl around, I stood and watched a man selling something on a stall beside one of the forsaken cheap-jack platforms. The man was without a hat, and his hair was wild. He stood on one leg. The naked foot of his other leg was displayed on a stool before him. He addressed half a dozen people.

"I can save all burning of the flesh," he yelled. "For God's sake take my advice."

The veins on his pale forehead swelled with the vehemence of his shouting. There was froth on the corners of his mouth. A big red-faced man, rolling the stub of a cigarette in his fat lips, stood beside him, looking down at the naked foot, on which several patches of plaster were stuck.

Four other people, including myself, gazed apathetically toward him. One of them looked like a farm laborer in his best clothes: cowhair was stuck into the band of his bowler hat. It was five o'clock, and owing to the weather and tea-hour, the cheap-jacks were silent.

"I want your confidence!" suddenly yelled the man with the veined forehead, staring at me.

"All you people go the right way to get it, too," I murmured ironically to myself, preparing to move away. Supposing he insisted on sticking plaster somewhere on me? Or gave me a black eye? It was my sort of ineffectual person that usually got black eyes.

"You'll be twisted everywhere else. But if you can't tell a gentleman when he's speaking, what the devil can you expect except to be twisted?"

Now what could I answer? I began to cough, but stopped suddenly, for he might sell cough-cure as well.

"I am here to help all who suffer in the pedal extremities, or, to drop medical professional technicalities, in the feet. No one here, within sound of my voice, need ever to be a cripple any more. My Paradise Corn Cure, sixpence the packet or three for a shilling, is famous in this world and the next, for my firm has been established over one hundred years!" His tone alternated between frenzy and the smoothest persuasion.

Across the street a small man in white peaked cap like a general's cap, and a white coat like a surgeon's coat, began to ring a hand-bell. "I say! I say!" he cried, then relapsed into a moody pacing up and down in the gutter before his white ice-cream cart. A few drops of rain fell.

I began to jot down in my note-book the statements of the vehement man about his Paradise Corn Cure. Just beyond the Ice-cream Merchant stood the Open Air Mission—a caravan on wheels, with an open side showing a raised platform. Four men and a woman sat on the platform out of the wind and rain. Religious texts were hung inside on the wooden walls. One of the men, with a heavy clean-shaven face and *pince-nez* spectacles, was playing a harmonium, and leading the singing of a hymn with a stentorian voice. The other men sang with loud determination. The woman's voice, frail but determined, was patched an octave higher.

> Throw the life-line!
> Throw the life-line!
> There's one poor sinner to be saved!

The Corn-cure Merchant threw them a wild glance, and muttered to himself. Then he almost shrieked, as a gust of wind flapped the skirts of our coats.

"Lord Almighty, the weather! But God is good, and if it rains today, it will be fine tomorrow. With my Paradise Corn Cure I'll shift a corn in two nights, I'll ease a bunion in three, I'll clear a wart in four dressings! For God's sake believe me! You'll be twisted elsewhere."

"I say! I say!" yelled the Ice-cream Man.

As I was writing down these words I saw, over the edge of my note-book, a pallid naked foot come to rest on the ground beside my boot. Looking up from my writing, I realized that the Corn-cure Merchant was staring furiously at me, his pale face but a few inches away from my own. I continued to write for a moment, and then closed the book and put it in my pocket.

"Ah ha," said the wild-haired man, softly, and intensified his gaze into my eyes.

"Ah ha, I hope it will be finer for you tomorrow," I murmured.

Swiftly he made this astonishing reply, "Environment and thought tells me that you were writing about me in that little book!"

I coughed several times.

"Am I right?"

"In a way, yes, perhaps you are."

"Answer me!" he thundered. "Am I right?"

"Well, you see—"

"Am I right?" he shrieked.

"I'm hoping so, for I want to get the truth if I can."

He stared at me, one eyebrow twisted almost vertical, the other depressed and almost hiding its eye.

"And may I ask why you want to get the truth about me?" he hissed.

"Because any distortion would not be real life," I explained.

"Ah ha. You think me a bloody rogue, no doubt?"

Before I could answer he shrieked furiously in my face. "I wasn't brought up in a market, you know! I'm not just a bit of the scum of the earth like all these twisters you see! Environment and thought tell me that you mean no good to me by writing in that little

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book! My authority for psychology is Thomas Carlyle! Can you stand here and name a better?"

"Well, I really—"

"Can you name a better authority than Carlyle?" he shrieked in fury and despair. "Give me a straight answer to a straight question! You are speaking to a gentleman, remember! I warn you that any insults will be strongly resented. Well?"

"I wish I had Carlyle's first editions," I said, desperately trying to avert a black eye. "Do you collect first editions? If so, may I put you on to a good speculation? My novels have just been remaindered for 10d each, and in a few years time they will be worth £10 or more each. Really, I'm not a twister!"

"Who are you, to insult me like this? Answer my question! What were you writing down about me in that book. I demand to see, at once!"

"Just a few notes."

He stared at me seriously. "Is that so? Indeed! Just a few notes!" His head leaned at an angle of forty-five degrees, as he took a new bearing on me.

"Are you aware, sir, that you have driven away potential clients from my business?" he said grimly. "Those people thought you were a policeman in plain clothes, and being but human they moved away, not wishing to be involved in anything beyond their control. What right have you, apart from the damage to my business, to write down notes about me? I consider it an unwarrantable impertinence, and I demand to see your book! Now, this minute! What are the notes for, may I ask?"

"For a chapter in a book I'm writing. The chapter is called 'The Fair.' I want to write truly about it."

"And what sort of book will it be, if you write truly? What is truth? Answer my question, sir."

"Well, I don't know; but I'm learning how difficult it is. For example, there is an old man in the village who repairs boots. You see him working in his cottage window. Well, this old man never goes to either of the inns. He keeps himself to himself. He is a very sharp man for his money—no harm in that—its a good clock that tells correct time. I've been told that he distrusts banks, and keeps all his savings in a chest under his bed. His religion is like that over there in that Mission. Now for years I've had him weighed-up in my mind as one of the narrow, old-fashioned type, whose every thought about the world was on a level with that money hoarded in the darkest corner."

"Well?"

"Well, one Sunday—it was Easter Sunday—I was with my wife and baby in a field called Netherhams, near the haystack. The baby was rolling naked on a rug on the grass. The Easter sun blessed him. The old chap came by, and stopped. I imagined he would strongly disapprove of the sunlight on the naked baby."

"Well?"

"His words were, 'There be nothing so fine for a plant or a chiel like the zin. For the zin maketh everything.' "

"Well?"

"That was surprise No. 1. The Elizabethan precision and simplicity of his expression! Then I told him about my book, and said, not expecting him to understand, for his trade is different from mine, 'The difficulty is to get everything down exactly as it is, as the sun sees it, as it were.' 'I understand,' he replied. 'You mean you must neither exaggerate, nor depreciate. Well, if you can do that, you'll write a good book.' "

"Well?"

"That from the man I had come, in some moods, to consider—unhappily, I must say, as I am always hoping to believe that all men are essentially the same under the rind and wrinkle of their different experiences—as justifying the kind of writing about country people which makes them out to be mean, selfish, dull-witted and altogether inferior creatures to the superior author who analyzes and portrays them. 'You must neither exaggerate nor depreciate.' "

"Probably he had been reading Carlyle!"

"I must ask him. So, you see, when I write about the fair, all I can do is to try and re-create it as it interested me."

"Quite! And I interested you, did I?"

"Frankly, you did. Your talk was so interesting that I intended to buy some of your Paradise Corn Cure for my little toe."

"I'll give you some!"

"That is very kind of you; but I feel, especially as I have frightened away some of your customers—the man with the healthy red face was looking most intently at your foot—I ought to make up for it by—"

"Don't you believe it! That red-faced chap is my partner, that's all. Here, take three packets. What sort of corn is it? Blood or plain?"

"Plain, I think. But I must insist that you take this shilling."

"Certainly not, as one philosopher to another. Dog does not eat dog! This'll do the trick. It's really very good stuff. So I shall be in your book, shall I?"

We parted in an almost embarrassing atmosphere of politeness; and when I passed his pitch half an hour later, I saw the red-faced man standing with *his* foot on the stool, while the wild-haired disciple of Carlyle was waving his arms at a small crowd in which stood the drover with the cowhair in his hat, and yes! the old Exmoor farmer.

"With my Paradise Corn Cure, I'll shift a corn in two nights, I'll ease a bunion in three, I'll clear a wart in four dressings."

The froth was again in the corners of his mouth. The veins showed on his forehead like the roots of thorns. When he saw me, the veins disappeared.

"You'll find it will ease your painful feet immediately, my friend!" he called out. "As it has eased the feet of hundreds of thousands of sufferers before you."

He bowed deeply toward me, and seeing the eyes of his listeners upon me, I assumed a slight limp before returning the bow.

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MEXICO MOVES TO THE RIGHT

By FRANK C. HANIGHEN

First-hand information regarding Mexico, supplied on a basis of no ax to grind, is rarer than one might imagine. THE COMMONWEAL *adjudges itself fortunate, therefore, in having secured the following paper from an observant and well-prepared traveler. Though written prior to the outbreak of new religious difficulties in two Mexican states, it anticipates these and furnishes a view of the general civic background against which events are taking place. The reader may judge whether the picture justifies optimism or the reverse. At all events, political Mexico has changed.—The Editors.*

MEXICO is changing. Gone is the time when it could be accurately designated "Red Mexico," when its leaders acted as if they belonged to the Left-wing Communists, when the very laws it promulgated seemed to be dictated from Moscow. Oil, land, industry, religion—in all these subjects the news which reached the United States had once the same deplorably radical flavor. Today the dispatches from Mexico City reflect a different spirit. Mexico is moving to the Right.

Not the least important agent in this transformation is the PNR. One may be pardoned for comparing this characteristically Mexican and indigenous organization with the Italian Fascisti, but in some aspects it is very similar. The PNR (the National Revolutionary party) is a government party, sustained by government funds, supported by a large and compact organization, tolerating no opposition and dedicated to its own perpetuity. True it lacks a Mussolini and it manifests none of the violence of its Italian counterpart. But its main support is the army, and, in spite of the radical sound of its title, its general policies are conservative and anti-Communistic.

Facetious critics have dubbed it "The Thirty-one Society" because it collects one day's pay from all government employees in each of the months having thirty-one days. The amounts collected are formidable and the evidences of the disbursement of these funds are visible in the large and powerful newspaper, *El Nacional,* the organ of the party, in a radio station and in many charitable organizations. Naturally these funds are used for consolidation and for assistance to members of the party in the various states; and when the PNR is behind a candidate his success is assured. Recently the PNR steam-roller worked most efficiently in the state elections in the state of Guanajuato.

Truth to tell, there are few who care to run against it. The PNR tolerates no adversaries in the Chamber of Deputies and that body is without an official opposition, dealing only with factional disagreements within the party. The press is muzzled, as the newspaper *Universal* had somber reason to learn. Some months ago, it printed without comment part of a speech by Luis Cabrera, former Minister under Carranza, attacking the government—a speech which, directed by Senator Norris at the administration in this country, would have excited little resentment. The *Universal* was obliged to stop publication of the remainder of the speech, was subjected to a rigorous persecution in the manner of advertising cancellations and subsequently like the other dailies has confined itself strictly to non-controversial news. Señor Cabrera, needless to say, has been sent into exile.

One of the principal undertakings of the government—and when one says the government one means the PNR—is the revision of the labor laws. Formerly the labor unions were able to exert a tyrannical and maleficient sway over employers, thus hindering the development of business. The new legislation proposes to prevent arbitrary and unreasonable strikes and disorders. Already the diminution of strikes is considerable, and one notices very few of the red and black banners which the strikers hang on the doors of shops as triumphant signs of successful strikes. Moreover the CROM (the Mexican Federation of Labor) and Morones, its leader, has lost all governmental influence and the last May Day parade was a very tame affair, evidence that the labor movement lacks force.

A waning labor movement, the deportation of Moscow agitators—Mexico has long since severed diplomatic relations with Russia—and the agrarian situation contribute to the conservative nature of the government. Many of the lands and haciendas taken from their owners under the Land Laws are now in the hands of the leaders of the government. Nothing has such a sobering effect as the possession of property.

The latest chestnut which one hears among business men of the capital concerns the new subway passage being constructed under the junction of the Calle Independencia and the Calle San Juan de Letran. "Why is President Ortiz Rubio like the subway? Because he is under Calles." It is true that General Calles is a firm supporter of the government and that in times of stress he comes to its aid. "Everyone" knows that he is the real President of the republic, and like so many things which everyone knows, it is not true. Except for certain of his pet projects, the ex-President does not interfere in the affairs of the government; he has repeatedly stated that he has retired and is letting the administration function unhindered. And all reports substantiate his statements. Furthermore the jest does injustice to President Ortiz Rubio, who is a capable, independent and energetic executive.

And the Church? The rightward trend of the government is also apparent in respect to the relations of Church and State. Just as Portes Gil instituted a change from the former sanguinary anti-clerical policy, so Ortiz Rubio has inaugurated an attitude of under-

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standing and good-feeling toward the Church on the part of the government. The Church has responded by coöperating with the government in matters other than ecclesiastical. On all churches in the land are affixed the proclamations of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, urging the people to join heartily in the government's campaign to stimulate home industries. Nor is that all. Through its extensive organizations the Church has assisted the authorities in gathering statistical information in the fight against smallpox, still a dread plague in Mexico. The writer himself has seen a church in Sinaloa plastered with anti-tuberculosis posters. Thus the Church indirectly contradicts those who complain that it is an archaic and mediaeval body.

The President expressed his profuse thanks to the Apostolic Delegate for his coöperation in these matters. Moreover, the Rector of the University, certainly an institution far from religious, has recently proposed establishing a chair of theology, and suggests that the ecclesiastical authorities delegate priests to teach in it. These facts and the general atmosphere inspired one of the most important prelates of the country, Archbishop Diaz, to say:

> While the Church is Mexico has not acquired all the liberties desired by Catholics, it has none the less steadily ameliorated conditions ever since the treaty with the government two years ago. Greater cordiality now reigns between the government and the Church, and all the various animosities which filled people during turbulent days of the religious persecution are fast disappearing. President Ortiz Rubio, animated by a profound patriotism, is trying by every possible means to unite the Mexican people and to bring about a complete harmony of spirit and action.

Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, as Apostolic Delegate, has handled with extraordinary ability and tact the relations with the government. His mission has been not only to conciliate federal officials but also to temper the natural desires of Catholics to recover at one step all the liberties lost during the persecution. He has seen the danger of not only those zealots who want too much but also of those who desire complete justice too soon. He perceives that these folk can arouse a spirit of militant hostility among those elements in the state who profess to believe that the Church aspires to political power. For, in spite of the commendable attitude of the government, the situation is still very delicate.

The difficulties which the Church faces in Mexico today lie not in the policy of the federal government, but in the unfortunate situations which exist in varying degrees of gravity in various states of the union. In the first place, the Constitution of 1917 vested the power of regulating the number of resident priests in the governments of the several states. In 1926, in the heat of anti-clerical fanaticism, laws were passed which imposed the most fantastic proportions on the misfortunate communicants of the Church. In the state of Campeche, the legislature prescribed that only one priest for every 40,000 inhabiants be permitted. Other states fixed less extreme ratios, but all were drastically unfair, making it obviously impossible for large numbers of Catholics to hear Mass. These laws have never been repealed, and while in many states they are overlooked and toleration of religious freedom exists, in many others fanatical anti-clericals have sought to enforce them. Another cause of friction lies in the frequent overlapping of diocesan and civil boundaries. Thus a bishop in one state may have part of his flock in the territory of another state; where the civil authorities wish to be intolerant this affords them an easy pretext for interference. With admirable conciliation the hierarchy have ordered the local priests to put up with these local regulations.

The most flagrant example of these intolerant states is the state of Tabasco. In spite of the circular issued by the Federal Minister of the Interior Canales ordering the various states to refrain from meddling in ecclesiastical affairs, the Governor, a bloody tyrant bearing the most appropriate name of Garrido Cannabal, has instituted a veritable anti-clerical reign of terror. Consequently in this state which has a population of 160,000, not one priest has been permitted to conduct religious services and Bishop Camacho appointed over a year ago is still waiting in Mexico City for more favorable conditions before he can proceed to his see. Many churches have been converted into public schools, cinemas and places of amusement. Recently a church was dynamited and when one recalls that all churches are now government property, one can realize the anarchy prevailing in this state.

Other illustrations of persecution exist. In May six priests were wrongfully deported from the state of Puebla. Seminaries in the state of Zacatecas have been forcibly closed by local authorities and catechism classes for children even in churches have been suppressed. Four priests were likewise banished from the state of Michoacan for no apparent reason and the Bishop of Tacambaro in the same state has not been permitted to enter his diocese. The states which have displayed fanatical tendencies are Tabasco, Michoacan, Vera Cruz, Nayarit and Zacatecas. In these states, that particular kind of political vermin which delights in attacking defenseless ecclesiastical folk exercises sway. The government, in the peace treaty drawn up by Portes Gil, promised to administer the laws in "a sincere spirit of concord and without sectarianism." But the government while it means to follow out this agreement is not strong enough to impose this spirit on the unruly states.

It should be mentioned, also, that there are a few individuals in the government with Protestant sympathies, who have encouraged and given protection to Protestant seminaries and schools, while persecuting the few Catholic schools which have surreptitiously continued to function. That this is a thoroughly unpopular sort of partiality is very evident. Most all Mexicans,

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regardless of their views of the Catholic Church, are united in opposing the encouragement of what is essentially an alien religious influence.

This recital of grievances presents rather a dark picture to the average American Catholic, unversed in Mexican history and conditions. Yet, mindful of the terrible days just passed, it is not foolish optimism to envisage a more happy future. Six bigoted states, while there are twenty-two which are tolerant, does not necessarily spell future trouble. And the peace treaty specifically allows Catholics to agitate for the legal reform of objectionable laws. The Catholics no longer desire the ancient union of Church and State, but a real separation of Church and State. They aspire to the conditions of religious liberty which exist in the United States. Before they can attain at least some of these conditions they must seek the amendment of those provisions of the constitution dealing with the regulation of the number of priests, and those forbidding parochial schools and religious charitable institutions. To this end they will soon present a monster petition of 2,000,000 signatures to Congress and they will insist that Congress take action. It is an evidence of the good-will of the government that it has made no effort to prevent the presentation of this petition.

Will it be heeded? No one cares to make positive predictions about events in Mexico. But there are new signs. The mad fanaticism of Calles has been replaced by a more practical and realistic spirit than has prevailed for some time in the republic. The PNR is essentially pragmatic; it has seen the futility of Communistic labor provisions and has sought to remedy them, and it has sought peace by the incorporation of the army into its ranks. Like the Fascisti it has avoided doctrinaire policies for practical necessities. Is it too much to expect that it will follow the Italian organization in recognizing the importance of the friendship of the Church? As active conservatives, will its leaders not recognize the great stabilizing influence of a happy and contented Church in a State which can little afford to overlook any such influence? No sensible churchman in Mexico after the events of the past few years desires union of Church and State; no practical politician will admit that the present Church-State conditions are satisfactory; but for a solution of their difficulties they can both well study a wise model in the happy status of the Catholic Church in the United States.

Unsung Hour

It is a time of peace, of joy in silence,
A hush of quiet love, a rest from pain:
There has been grief that I have lulled with singing;
There will be grief again.

Oh leave this hour its silentness in passing!
Pain woke the singing voice and stung the lute!
While there is quietness and love ungrieving
Let us be mute.

MARGARET WIDDEMER.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SWAN

IT WAS a surprise when Godfrey de Bouillon "made the front page," as he did when there was an investiture of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre at St. Patrick's Cathedral. When an Egyptian tomb is opened, or the diggers sink to a new level in Ur of the Chaldees, or Sodom and Gomorrah give up some of their secrets, it is news. Godfrey gets a few lines in our histories for schools, we can label and date him with the first Crusade, and there most of us leave him.

But there is one good reason for remembering him. If we want to understand something of the sentiments by which our ancestors were actuated, then it is worth while knowing that over a period of four hundred years, say from about 1100 until after 1500, Godfrey influenced Christendom in his character of Knight of the Swan. For most of that time knighthood was conferred "before the swan," the triple implication being that a knight was endowed with personal valor, that he had contempt for death, and that he was to hold inviolable the honor of his lady, as became a devotee of the Blessed Virgin. There used to be, in one of the readers, some verses about a knight who was by no means "without reproach" but for whom the portals of heaven opened because no day passed without his invoking "Mary, Queen of Mercy." Charles Reade, in "The Cloister and the Hearth," marks the beginning of the Reformation period with another bad old knight, who comforted his companions with "Courage, mon ami, the devil is dead." The transition line is there.

There are good story-tellers after every war, and there are eager listeners for the tales they tell. It is twelve years since the armistice, and Gibbons and Woollcott are still telling their radio audiences of deeds of derring-do. They had their counterparts in the France of 1110. These told stories of valor in the Holy Land, retold them and went on telling them and improving upon them. They had plenty of time, not being limited to the quarter-hour contracted for by some manufacturer of cold cream or cigarettes. Ultimately, someone wrote down the tales. It was they who gave us the Knights of the Swan. The first tellers selected six or seven paladins, but in a short time the fame of Godfrey outshone that of all the others.

He had a perfectly good genealogy, but they made for him a better one. He was the son of Eustace of Boulogne, on the Channel, and of Ida, daughter of Godfrey of Lorraine. The story-teller, not to be bound down by the table of descents of a long line of Godfreys, has the swan bring the Knight Helie to the little mountain principality of Bouillon, where he marries "the duchess," departing from her when she becomes inquisitive in disregard of his instructions, leaving, however, the horn of ivory for her protection. This she inconsiderately left hanging on a nail and forgot all about it when there was a fire, so that the knight had to come back and rescue it. Thereafter it remained with "some noble family of Flanders" who incorporated it in their arms. The Knight Helie was obviously the Greek sun god, and it was the swan, Apollo's bird, that brought him. The name Helie was adopted in all the first families, and was carried to England, yes and to Ireland, long before anyone dreamed that Wagner was to dub the god Lohengrin and put him in an opera, swan and all.

Having left in the inconsequent air the historical claim of the rough Godfrey to her paternity, the romancers married Ida to Eustace, thus calmly conforming to fact, and confidently attributed to their son the qualities of the god they chose for his grandfather. His invincible valor, his humility, his love of all the finer virtues, everything in the example he set for

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the knights who came after him, they represented as of his heritage from the swan knight. And the swan itself, as they were at pains to prove, was a brother of the knight, who was one of seven brothers, victims of a cruel woman, who could not be restored to manhood because of the collar she put around each of their necks before she transformed them; but in his case the collar got broken. Godfrey's family, when the time came, placed the swan in the middle of their shield. Godfrey might perish; the swan was immortal. They installed him wherever knights were invested, but there was special honor in bearing him on shield or crest.

Matthew Paris, who wrote in the thirteenth century, proclaimed his patrons the Toenis to be the true Knights of the Swan, and in listing the knights at the hosting at Kerlaverock, against the Scots, the contemporary chronicler mentions the representative of this family as obviously the one entitled to the honor, which later went to the descendants of the daughters as well as the sons of that house. The Bohun, Beauchamp, Tregoz, Touchet, Clare and related families all honored the swan in one device or another. There was a Gilbert of Chesterton of 1150 whose Walton descendants bore three swans on their shield, as did several others. They are shown on the seal of a granddaughter of Henry I, Joan of Cornwall. The Sinnotts of Wexford have them on both shield and crest, and the Irish Walshes had a swan crest which they carried back to the Continent, where they had a regiment in France and another in Austria. Edward III entered a tournament with the cry, "Hey, hey, the wyth swan, by God's troth I am thy man." Henry V, when prince, was authorized to allow his livery of the swan to be worn by his attendants. In Germany, devotion to the Blessed Virgin was the avowed distinction of the Knights of the Swan. And in France, Claude of Brittany, who married Francis I and lived unhappily for a few years, had the swan of her Montfort ancestors painted in the coffered ceiling of the great staircase at Blois, where it alternates with the salamander of her all too amiable husband. Here, as with the crests of Sinnott and Walsh, the swan is pierced by an arrow.

In the year 1545, John Leland, the earliest English antiquary, published a Latin poetical panegyric of Henry VIII, which he called "Swan Song." It was time. The ideals allied with the swan story were about to disappear. Of that age there still are traces, for one stumbles upon the Hostel of the High Mother of God when one goes to Chalons. Apollo's bird was happier in those days than he would be now. Plato has Socrates tell of the bird's defiance of death. An old antiquarian carries the subject farther. "He pursueth the spouse breaker even unto death, for he will not leave till he kills, or is killed, and before his death he singeth, as rejoicing at the end of all calamities." What with companionate marriage, easy divorce and all, he surely would be unhappy now.

J. C. W.

A l'Annèe Trentième de Mon Age

The Queen of Candy in a painted tomb
Sleeps in Assisi as the ages pass,
King Henry lies in Pisa, and in Rome
A bird is singing that all flesh is grass.

The young years with hair as white as milk,
And soft, soft hands weave nets to catch surprise,
Clouding Orion and the silver Bear—
Hide from me, hide their inexorable eyes!

SPEER STAHAN.

COMMUNICATIONS

LETTER FROM A RELIGIOUS IN SPAIN

(*This letter had neither heading nor signature.*)

There is a safe opportunity by which I can send you this letter, and I am profiting by it to send you news of us. . . . Monday, May 11, a band of Communists, led by Russians who have been one month in Spain, burned a Jesuit college in the morning. They, the Jesuits, have the first honors always where there is a question of persecution. At four o'clock in the afternoon they hastened to our convent. . . . Fifteen brigands only attacked our house, not with firearms but with buckets filled with petroleum. A crowd followed these ferocious men, it is true, but took no part in the burning. We are not far from where there are about seven thousand soldiers in garrison, and certainly thirty soldiers would have sufficed to maintain order. The entire population were in sympathy with us, and gave evident proof in opening their houses in hospitality to us. It was from their homes that we witnessed the burning of our convent.

Our Reverend Mother was fearless. At half past four sinister rumors circulated through the neighborhood. The novices were making their adoration. Reverend Mother advanced the hour of Benediction so as to have everything ready. The chaplain suddenly entered the sanctuary, opened the tabernacle, took all the Sacred Hosts, put them into a corporal, and left at once, while the novices were in the chapel. They said to themselves, while remaining in their places, "There is something serious going on." Immediately the bell summoned them to leave the chapel, and happily all obeyed instantly. Reverend Mother spoke with great composure and said: "The novices will all go upstairs and take their secular dresses and put them on as quickly as possible; the other religious must go to the lodge at once." Prompt and perfect obedience saved many lives. The novices, as they went downstairs, met Communists carrying pails of petroleum. One of them had the audacity to take a photograph of the Reverend Mother as she left the house. One of the religious noticed that the large Host for the ostensorium had been forgotten. She rushed forward and took the lunette, wrapping it carefully in her apron, as also some papers. One of the brigands saw this and cried out to the others: "Let her pass; she is an invalid." They allowed her to pass, and being sure that all had left the house, set it on fire, and went out. As several convents were set afire in the city at the same time, the firemen did not know which way to turn, so that on their arrival everything was burning; they surrounded the building, and prevented all personal accidents.

At half past five the flames were raging and at half past six the whole building was consumed. Only a statue in the inner court remained standing—it is impossible to understand how it resisted the action of the intense heat. As for the rest, there is only a heap of ruins surrounded by a guard of soldiers forbidding all approach. The next day a mason drew from the ashes precious stones fallen from magnificent sacred vessels.

At the first news families came to offer hospitality to our religious. At the same time, the door of another of our convents was set on fire, and a third attacked, but the flames were extinguished. . . . If you only knew with what delicate charity we have been received—everything so carefully provided, foreseen and arranged with such calm, and what a spirit of abnegation prevails! It is true that here the Catholics possess most extraordinary courage, and courage worthy of the highest praise, but as for us there is also need of great delicacy so as not to abuse their kindness, nor compromise them.

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Our superiors are admirable. . . . They are planning to carry on our work without exposing our friends. How edifying the novices are! Not a sigh nor a tear, all so truly happy to practise poverty. Soon they are to cross the frontier. . . . Their families are admirable, proud to give up their daughters under such circumstances.

I must tell you why no resistance was offered. In the house where I was I heard the following explanation, which seemed to me true. Never could the Republicans have succeeded without the help of the Communists and the Socialists, and they bought, so to speak, this union with promises, for example, the four-hour day at 20 pesos—to which they had not held; so to calm the Communists and Socialists, they gave them a free hand.

We are in the hands of God. What I admire is the deep faith with which all say, "We have sinned and we deserve the punishment." The churches are full; they pray as they never have prayed.

MULTIFOLD WAR GUILT

Evanston, Ill.

TO the Editor: Mr. Belloc's letter on revision of the treaties sets forth a number of pertinent issues. What do revisionists want done, he asks, about Pomerania, the Upper Adige, Transylvania, reparations, war debts? These are all problems to be faced. But Mr. Belloc's principal thesis strikes me as strange. He tells us that discussion of revision is futile until an answer is forthcoming to the question: "What do those who ask for revision want those who won the war to do?"

Mr. Belloc, I think, is much less reliable in this thesis of futility than he usually is. To my mind, if there is futility in any open-minded discussion of revision, it is precisely in the discussion of separate corrective programs by men and women who have not first accepted certain facts and settled upon certain general principles underlying the whole problem of revision. For unless the precarious status of the Western world is recognized and unless it is regarded in the light of sound principles, no satisfactory solution of the details ever will be reached.

As a matter of fact, it may well be that alternative solutions will prove possible in the cases of some of the individual points in controversy—if only those points are approached by sane statesmen backed by enlightened publics in the different nations. Whatever we think, therefore, of the cry of Germany for the return of the Corridor, whatever we believe may be a proper figure for German reparations, and whatever we consider the United States should do about canceling or scaling down the war debts, we shall do well to reflect upon conditions as they exist.

If Mr. Belloc's advice is to be followed literally, it means, as I see it, that we shall not discuss the intolerable burden of the Reich and work for its alleviation until we know what the ultimate alleviation should be. Which is much like saying that a man should not decide to build a house until he decides whether it shall be Dutch Colonial or Georgian. The road to final revision may be a long one. May our progress upon it be rapid. For my part, I hope that President Hoover's proposal of a year's moratorium will lead to a sharp scaling down, during the year, of reparations and debts. But such a sequence would not end the problem of revision. And for some time to come there will be nothing futile in considering the general aspects—political, economic, historical and humane—of that problem.

FRANK A. SMOTHERS.

TEN IMMORTAL TUNES

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editor: It was pleasant to find in the June 3 issue of THE COMMONWEAL such sympathetic and kindly response to my little sketch called "Ten Immortal Tunes." Mr. Balfe is quite right, of course, in his appraisal of the exquisite "Londonderry Air," which I know well in the various adaptations he mentions, as well as the arrangements for string quartet by Fritz Kreisler and—isn't it Frank Bridge? The whole mass of traditional Gaelic music is rich in arresting beauty; one could scarcely go wrong in choosing from it almost at random.

Naturally, since writing the article I have been haunted by the innumerable melodies which I might have mentioned, all of them entitled, probably, to quite as much consideration as was bestowed on the successful candidates. I have wondered, for instance, why I didn't manage to include the lovely "Spinn, Spinn," often sung in German, but really of Swedish origin; or how I could have rejected the flawless air to "Die Königskinder," the old Teutonic version of the Hero and Leander story; or why I didn't make a place for Siegmund's "Spring Song" in "Die Walküre." Or, to revert to the Irish vein, why something couldn't have been done about the enchanting "Silent, O Moyle, Be the Voice of Thy Waters." But, as Mr. Balfe suggests, no one person's choice could hope to be generally representative, especially when selection is so narrow as to number. By the way, I am wondering whether he is a descendant of the illustrious Balfe, whose "The Heart Bowed Down" surely deserves all honor at the hands of any connoisseur of melody.

As for Mr. Farrelly's idea that this ten might profitably be assembled between one pair of covers as a source of training in taste, it sems to me sound. Songs have been compiled under a great variety of classifications, but never, so far as I am aware, exclusively on a basis of their common claim to extraordinary beauty and validity of substance.

FRANCES BOARDMAN.

TWO MASTERS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: We were much interested in the excellent review in THE COMMONWEAL for June 24 of Dr. Terry's latest book on Bach. At the top of the article, however, the title is given simply as "Bach" whereas the full title is "Bach: The Historical Approach." The reviewer refers in the course of his review to the second half of the title as the subtitle. This, however, is not strictly accurate, and in view of the fact that Dr. Terry's great life is also called "Bach" ("Bach: A Biography"), I fear that this description may produce some confusion. The price also is incorrectly given as $3.50. The correct price is $2.50.

J. B. ORRICK,
Oxford University Press.

CATHOLIC PAN-AMERICANISM

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: A few weeks ago Mr. William Franklin Sands in a letter published in THE COMMONWEAL referred to me in connection with my Latin-American activities. Since then I have received communications on the subject from persons evidently under the impression that I am the Rector of the Catholic University in Washington. The fact that there are on the faculty of that university three persons named Ryan is doubtless the cause of the error. I should appreciate it if you would permit me to take this means of making the correction.

REV. EDWIN RYAN.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Pirates of Penzance

PERHAPS it is unorthodox to place the "Pirates of Penzance" rather far down the scale among the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. If so, I shall have to be heretical on this subject, for in spite of many moments of sheer delight—mostly due to Sullivan's incomparable melodies—I have never been able to enthuse over the "Pirates" with that same pleasant abandon inspired by "Patience," "Iolanthe," "The Mikado" and even "Pinafore." It seems to me that Gilbert, in this case, descended from his usual high satire to a mere plot, and that the theme of "the slave to duty" hits so mildly at foibles of British character as to be simply amusing without any sharp brilliancy.

The current revival by the Milton Aborn repertory company is very nearly on a par with all their other delightful productions. It is especially gratifying in the ample opportunities it affords to hear Howard Marsh at his best and also that diminutive little artist, Vivian Hart. Miss Hart has a very light voice, but handles it with exquisite grace and delicious phrasing. Frank Moulan as the "modern major general" is better than as Koko, but not as good as in the part of Bunthorne. Herbert Watrous lends portly absurdity to the pirate king, and William Danforth gives one of his usual broad caricatures in his impersonation of the police sergeant.

So far as the production goes, all is well, and certainly no music lover will waste his time in listening once more to Sullivan's score. But unless one is a complete Gilbertian, one cannot hope to spend an evening of the same unqualified delight as at four or five of the real Savoy masterpieces.

The quite unusual success of this series of revivals at popular prices leads one to ask seriously whether the New York theatre is half as unsound as its critics suppose. Here we have a summer season of revivals, at a time when many of the traditional Gilbertians might be supposed to be out of town or else so solicitous for their own comfort that they would not venture into the oven-like interior of a Broadway theatre. Yet these performances have drawn large and enthusiastic audiences, week after week.

There is at least an implication in this, that hundreds of theatre-goers can be drawn from their lairs by anything that really catches some of the old glamor and joy of the stage. These are not the same audiences that attend Mr. Ziegfeld's gorgeous mediocrities and the general run of musical reviews. They are people to whom the theatre has once meant a great deal, and who have become so discouraged with the offerings of recent years that they now frankly prefer a good book to a night on Broadway. Yet the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan, when produced in a spirit of loving devotion, will bring them forth.

What I would like to discover for certain is this: Would these same people come forth if the theatre today were to settle down once more to its old ideals, and produce plays and operettas of simple design and sturdy honesty and expert workmanship? My own thought is that there are enough of the old type theatre-goers left to support two or three institutions of the type Miss Le Gallienne has founded on Fourteenth Street and of the type Mr. Aborn is reviving for us today. And in between this older generation and the modern seekers for the sensational is a great group of people who respond generously to almost anything that is well done. They are not content to stay at home. They do want amusement, and at present they patronize much of the theatrical trash shown on Broadway simply for want of anything better.

I never have been a great enthusiast for the "art theatre," with its self-conscious attempts to make the theatre some sort of artistic pinnacle, to be scaled only by the initiates. Such efforts, it seems to me, choke off most of the spontaneity which is of the very soul of the popular theatre. But somewhere there are surely groups of actors, playwrights and directors who know what it means to make the theatre a place of fun and laughter and contrasting tears and the magic of day-dreams. I feel that their turn is coming, and that the next five years will see a marked rebirth of simplicity in the theatre world, and with it a return of much of the glamor with which honest people still like to fill their lives. (At the Erlanger Theatre.)

The Viking

VARICK FRISSELL died in attempting to perfect this film of the Labrador country. After making a perilous journey into the ice with a crew of sealers, he was dissatisfied with some of the pictures taken and returned to make some new scenes. A mysterious explosion blew up the ship, killing Frissell and many of his devoted co-workers. It is hard to tell, therefore, what the final result might have been, but even as it stands, this picture is a notable achievement in that very field where, as I have frequently insisted, the motion picture is supreme.

By far the most stirring moments I have ever spent before the screen have been during the showing of so-called nature epics, pictures drawn from the far extremities of the earth and shot through with that authentic feeling which only photography can provide. The stage could never hope remotely to equal the impression of nature poised against man which one gathers from such pictures as "Chang," "The Silent Enemy," "Trader Horn" or "The Viking." The epic quality of the pictures comes from no artificial illusion—which is the peculiar property of the theatre—but from the keen and overwhelming conviction of reality. In such cases truth is infinitely more powerful than fiction.

There is only the slightest thread of story running through "The Viking"—the quarrel and rivalry between two men, one of whom is supposed to be a coward and also, because of a disaster his father suffered at sea, to bring bad luck to any ship on which he takes a berth. This story is handled without any exaggerated heroics and blends quite naturally with the main interest of the picture, which is the authentic portrayal of the dangers and the romance of sealing in the waters bordering on the ice pack.

Possibly because I have been on a small ship nosing through the floating ice about ten degrees from the north pole, the scenes in "The Viking" hold for me an added flavor of grim reality. I think, however, that their obvious realism would be equally enthralling for one who had never been north of Maine or Scotland. The awful majesty of the ocean ground swell beneath the iceflow and through the cracks in great icebergs is something not to be forgotten. When the screen can bring us such reminders of forces almost cosmic in their impact, it is rendering a service equal to the prophetic insight of great poets. (At the Little Carnegie Theatre.)

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BOOKS

More or Less Literary

THE WORLD, full of a number of things, is likewise well supplied with new books of literary criticism. Since not all of these can be reviewed at length, we shall glance at a rough dozen of them here with regretful brevity. For a considerable length of time, students have been concerned with the longevity of certain "cosmic myths" that have appealed again and again to poets, especially since the Renaissance. It is now granted, for instance, that there exists a definite relationship—which is not that of cause and effect—between the Romantics and the Rosicrucians. And just as the doctrines of Bruno and Paracelsus resurrected a great many primitive fears and imaginings (not to mention valuable ideas), so the poets attached themselves to irrational but often emotionally suggestive symbols old as the race. "Literature and Occult Tradition," by Professor Denis Saurat (translated by Dorothy Bolton. New York: The Dial Press. $4.00), is an endeavor to supply a working synthesis of these things. Unfortunately it is far too sketchy and jumpy to be of great value. The opening section is a discussion of non-Christian religious elements in modern poetry; the second part is an outline of myths in the Cabala; the third is an interesting commentary on some of Spenser's philosophic ideas. We have as yet so few books on this subject that students of literature cannot afford to neglect Professor Saurat's, disappointingly chaotic though it is.

"Magazine Making," by John Bakeless, is a breezily written account of how to run a modern periodical and is distinguished, perhaps, by the critical attitude (New York: The Viking Press. $3.00). Chapters on virtually all aspects of the sanctum situation have been compiled on the basis of information gathered in many, many places. It is hard not to like such a book; it is difficult to agree with it. Frankly, Mr. Bakeless's treatise seems to us a good performance sprinkled with bad moments. When for instance he quotes Dr. Canby to say that a reviewer should adhere to one kind of book, we believe we have at last found the clue to the prevalence of bad criticism. There just isn't a really good reviewer alive who has stuck to that advice. Even so, the Bakeless offering seems the best available thing of its kind.

Biography is one of the best of critical methods. "Heinrich Heine," by H. Walter, is easily one of the notable reëvaluations of that melodious poet's life work (New York: Bloch Publishing Company. $4.25). The author, who is a professor in McGill University, attempts to wander between Heine's quite untrustworthy facetiousness and his sincerity, between his fine achievement and his careless failure. All the biographical portions of the book are written with great discrimination; and though the criticism reveals an evident *parti pris,* it is almost never slow-witted. Illustrations add to the usefulness of a volume which, of course, is hardly edifying literature. Nor is the life of the author of "The Prelude" so Victorian of aspect as it once seemed to be, now that the love affairs have all (?) been duly unearthed. "Wordsworth," by C. H. Herford (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.00), is a stately, affectionate but very useful short life which boils down a great deal of research and adds personal comment. "Chaucer," by John Masefield, is a reprint of a lecture spoken at Cambridge (New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00). It is one of the most vapid and worthless publications we have seen in a good while. Although "Leo Tolstoy and His Works," by Aylmer Maude (New York: Oxford University Press. $.50), seems to be chiefly an advertisement for the "Complete Tolstoy," it has all the essential information in readable form.

Volumes of an anthological character include "England under Victoria," edited by H. V. Routh (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00). This is Number 7 in the excellent "English Life in English Literature" series, which aims to reveal by means of carefully selected and coördinated passages from the great authors what attitude a given age took toward the major problems and facts. Mr. Routh's volume is most interesting and illuminating, but it seems strange he should have failed to quote from Manning anent social problems and to include anything by the Baron Von Hügel, possibly the most influential thinker of the period. What a modern poet looks like in the dress usually accorded the classics may be learned by perusing "An Introduction to Edwin Arlington Robinson and Selected Poems of Edwin Arlington Robinson" (New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50). The introduction is a reprint of the memoir published a little more than a year ago by Professor Charles Cestre, which received attention by reason of its brave if blunt attack on "a large part of the literature of today" which "seems to have become a free field for impulse to ramp in, with sensation and sensuality as companions." Mr. Robinson is seen as an antidote to all this and as a "modern classic." The selections have been arranged by Professor Bliss Perry, who contributes incense by way of a preface. An edition of "The Works and Life of Christopher Marlowe" is being published under the direction of Professor R. H. Case. The third volume contains "The Jew of Malta" and "The Massacre of Paris," edited by H. S. Bennett. In every respect this is a notable edition, to which format, textual accuracy and scrupulous annotation contribute all one could expect of them (New York: The Dial Press. $4.00). "An Introduction to American Prose," edited by Professors Prescott and Sanders (New York: F. S. Crofts. $3.00), is the usual school anthology—and in our opinion the usual useless school anthology, guaranteed to kill any genuine interest in literature a student may have possessed. As you can imagine, the "feature" is the addition of a few contemporary selections, by reason of which Willa Cather and Sherwood Anderson bring the volume to a triumphant finish. We are surprised that Mr. Crofts, to whom we are indebted for many excellent books, should have issued anything so tame.

Last but not least we should like to mention a new translation of Dante's "Paradiso," by the Reverend A. R. Bandini. During many years Father Bandini has labored patiently to complete a rhymed, linear translation of the "Divine Comedy." The task is now completed, and we have no hesitation in saying that the version has qualities which rank it with the best of existing translations. Its fidelity to the original makes it particularly useful to those who wish to read with one eye on the original. The edition is attractively bound and illustrated (San Francisco: The People's Publishing Company. $2.00).

T. C.

Chauvinism in Review

The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism, by Carlton J. H. Hayes. New York: Richard R. Smith, Incorporated. $3.50.

CARLTON HAYES, whose downright and clear-cut convictions and impatience of cant are so annoying to various groups of historical theorists, has put out a better book than his "Essays on Nationalism." That is natural, for he correctly sees in the modern phenomenon of nationalism evils as well as good; he sees in it a major historical development; he

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is a clear-sighted historian to whom history is not a narrow record of the dead and gone, but a living and universal thing. To him history is such record as we have of the things of yesterday out of which flow the things of today, and which, properly analyzed and understood, can give us some measure of probability for tomorrow.

Since nationalism is a major phenomenon of modern history, and today's profound convictions and disputes are the beginnings of that record which will be tomorrow's history, criticism of his "Essays," friendly or unfriendly, or even hostile, have sharpened his analysis here of its historical evolution and hardened his convictions as the natural result.

He might have turned this book around and put his "Conclusion" first, and very first of all he might have put his final remarks addressed particularly to Americans on "national" education.

"We Americans," he says, "must give immediate and close thought to our own American nationalism and to our own American education." The very fact that he uses that combination of words, "our own American nationalism," shows how truly important it is that Americans give "immediate and close thought to our own American education," for we did not start out to be a nation, but we began as a federation of national states.

From the point of view of the "traditional nationalist" and of the "liberal nationalist" whose genesis he explains, it is of the utmost importance that American nationalism be analyzed and understood in the light of American history—not the partizan record of victorious political philosophies which supply most of our earlier texts; nor the record of the triumphal racial groups reborn in America by reason of the conditions formed here which attracted them to come in the first place; nor the tendencious record of specialists. Study of American history should be the dispassionate analysis of the whole glorious evolution as it is sentimentally acclaimed by some; the reversal of practically everything Americans started to do, as is callously asserted by others.

That analysis cannot be made by anyone living in some water-tight and air-tight compartment of history. It can only be made by one viewing history as a living whole; by one keenly conscious of America as the product of Europe, plus something else, and thoroughly aware of the evolution of modern Europe from its roots in the dim past.

A study of the historical evolution of American nationalism would be a logical third product of Mr. Hayes's keen and unsentimental mind.

"Proletarian nationalism," which has been so powerful a factor in making us a unit national state within the shell of the federation of sovereign states we started out to be and were, may be admitted to have bettered in great measure the condition of that part of the European proletariat which acquired American citizenship, as part of the general "rise of the common man" in our country. It is nevertheless true that this evolution has all but wiped out American ideals and American tradition under the impact of mass immigration setting up a "racial solidarity" group life isolated from the American community into which it settled. The process might be called not unfairly a new European colonization of America in a form not contemplated in Monroe's message to Congress but certainly foreseen to some extent by members of the Federalist party and other early citizens.

That flooding out of American tradition and ideals by new citizens who had no share in their upbuilding has certainly led to a general lowering of tone as well as to a new form of

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nationalism, a lowering visible at every turn, in every manifestation of our common life.

It was not uncommon for early Americans to try to lead religious lives; to hold profound and reasoned convictions concerning the manner in which their communities should grow; to be alertly and integrally part, each, of his "colony," developing into a sovereign republic. Today a man who attempts however feebly to translate his religious convictions into his daily acts, becomes a "mystic" to his neighbors; a man who retains in whatever small degree some remnant of traditional understanding of what his forebears and their neighbors meant to make of America becomes "a historian" or even "an archaeologist"; a shrewd politician who has risen to office by impassioned speeches on "racial solidarity" of newcomers, becomes "a statesman" when he remembers the names of Hamilton or Jefferson. Students in college will aver that Andrew Jackson and Woodrow Wilson are the only true American Presidents we have ever had, "because neither was tainted by colonial ancestry," and Washington, from being the seat of the federal government, has become the national capital. "States' rights," a meaningless term even to the political party that has constituted itself to be their hereditary guardian, are all that is left of the complete sovereignty of the embryonic nations which created for their convenience and for their protection under threat of war, a coöperative union and a federal government.

"The Historical Evolution of Nationalism" is a second important step, excellent as a general thesis; incomplete for American needs unless followed by the third constructive analysis.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

Ethiopian Steps to Parnassus

The Book of American Negro Poetry; chosen and edited by James Weldon Johnson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00.

FOR TEN years the anthology of Negro poetry collected by James Weldon Johnson has been a standard reference in the subject. It now appears in an enlarged edition, containing much that has been produced since 1921. New poets like Countee Cullen and Langston Hughes have appeared, and the quality of their work, from the purely literary standpoint, has improved. It is no longer possible to associate the Negro poet with plantation songs and dialect verse. For the most part, he still speaks the voice of his race; the plaintive note continues to dominate his lyrics, but there is a deepening of his emotion; some of the laughter is gone and a serious thoughtfulness has taken its place. As Langton Hughes puts it, he "has known rivers" and his "soul has grown deep like the rivers." Through most of the selections in this anthology there runs what Gwendolyn Bennett expresses as "the surging of my sad people's soul." There is comparatively little that would not be singled out immediately as of Negro authorship; the Negro poet is still at his best when he is in his racial field. In parts, it is purely race-conscious; but the poetry of more universal appeal is that which clothes the common thoughts of all mankind with that peculiar imagery of scriptural literalness which, coming from the Negro heart, has enriched our stock of aesthetic ideals.

Mr. Johnson, in the new preface, discusses some of the reasons that have brought this about. In the preface to the original edition, reprinted in this edition, the contribution of the Negro to literature in general is narrated, and special emphasis is laid on ragtime rhythm and dialect. But the newer writers are abandoning dialect. The fact is that a poem by a Negro, in Negro dialect, seems more like a step backward than forward.

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Basically, there is no Negro dialect; there is merely a certain softening and sweetening of the ordinary speech of the region in which the Negro lives. This accounts for the variety which appears in Negro dialect poems from "When de Co'n Pone's Hot," of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, to the "Memphis Blues," of Sterling A. Brown.

There are selections from forty authors. One of them, Otto Leland Bohanan, at one time did special work at the Catholic University. Many are graduates of or studied at Howard University. Columbia, Chicago, Harvard, Oberlin, New York University and other institutions are also represented. Countee Cullen's "From the Dark Tower," or Anne Spencer's "Before the Feast of Shusan," deserve a place in any anthology of American literature.

AUGUSTINE WALSH.

Anent the Near East

Turkey Faces West, by Halide Edib Hanoum. New Haven: Yale University Press. $3.25.

IF A SERIES of books could persuade the egoists of the West to understand the East, then surely "Turkey Faces West" would be included. The best value of this book lies not so much in its suggested historical knowledge, of which doubts and some criticisms could be found, but in the deliberate showing up of the arrogance of the West in dealing with the Near East. This is done in such polite and lucid manner that many who still retain their Western hauteur and dignity, will be chagrined to realize what a noble band of political imbeciles conducted state affairs in Europe during 1910-1925.

The author sets forth facts such as the well-known case of the two Turkish dreadnoughts, which though built in England for the Turkish government, were commandeered on the outbreak of the European war and for which Britain did not grant any compensation to the Turkish government (page 139). This was followed by a refusal of the Western liberal nations to reconsider a modification of the Capitulations, upon which the author says, "There is not the slightest doubt that had the Allies consented to modify the supreme symbol of Turkish humiliation—the Capitulations—twenty enver pashas would not have sufficed to drag Turkey into the general lunacy of war" (page 138).

The chapters dealing with the history of Turkey tend to gloss over the facts—such as the Armenian massacres, the so-called Blood Tribute, under which male children were snatched away from their homes to become janissaries or civil servants of the government of the sultans. It is no mitigation of a crime to assert that he who suffered from the crime was ultimately well trained or even educated. The disposition of that which is stolen, however excellent, is no mitigation of the theft (page 20).

The book is a mixture of courage and special pleading and will be welcomed by many readers who like a smooth presentation of facts. But narration of the author's career as a teacher, a journalist, a social worker, a cavalry leader, must not blind us to the fact that the compilation of a serious record of such a state as Turkey, during such a world tragedy as that of 1914-1918, and the innumerable results flowing therefrom, cannot be done by reference to such undisputed points as Gladstone's speeches on the Armenian and Bulgarian atrocities or his alleged Turcophobia, or the tracing of the modern Turk to a possible Turanian stock. None the less the book is intriguing in style, pleasant in presentation, and often eloquently persuasive.

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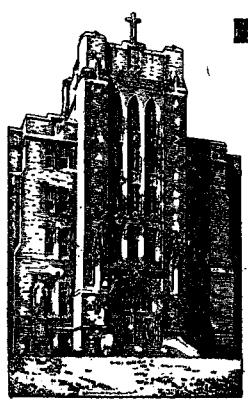

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Briefer Mention

Sybil, by Phelps-Morane. Paris: François Bernouard.

AS A SPRIGHTLY comedy of manners, this is very amusing. It makes excellent summer reading, or train reading, or for that matter, any kind of reading but too serious and analytical reading. A young Frenchman of elegance goes to England and the oddities of Anglo-Saxon customs and manners, compared to those Latin ones with which he is familiar, give flavor to his adventures. English high life, parties at country houses, cold, flaxen-haired girls, London club and sporting life, bemuse the naive young man. Being a Frenchman, he is of course impelled to love, but Sybil, one of the typical flaxen-haired girls, though she has an intellectual appreciation for his elegance and aristocracy, cannot overcome her bored aloofness. An equally farcical reverse could of course be written from the point of view of a young Englishman in France, but that does not mean that there is any animus in this book. It cleverly achieves that detached point of view which sees the fantasticalness of human forms that from another point of view may seem the most ordinary and right.

Thunder over Europe, by E. Alexander Powell. New York: Ives Washburn. $3.00.

MR. POWELL'S book is sensational but in spite of that as loyal to the facts as the present reviewer considers it possible to be in popular phraseology, designed first of all to warn people of impending war danger. The claim is made that whether or not Europe takes to bayonets again depends upon the forces represented by Mussolini, Poincaré, Pilsudski, Benes, Hitler and Stalin. He is violently critical of the French, but holds that their attitude is based on an inferiority complex. On the other hand, Briand is by all odds "Europe's greatest statesman." Particularly valuable are the sections on "Upper Silesia," "Rumania" and "Italian Diplomacy." It is a forceful book, prejudiced in spots, but as a whole only too sadly realistic.

The Flight from Reason, by Arnold Lunn. New York: The Dial Press. $3.50.

THE FOREWORD to this book is by Dr. S. Parkes Cadman. Opinions differ on Dr. Cadman. They will probably differ *pari passu* on the value of this book. Mr. Lunn discusses philosophy, biology, physics, psychical research, religion and a number of other things. His general attitude is antagonistic to scientific rationalism, and he holds firmly to the thesis that science and religion are not in conflict. When Christopher Hollis said that Thomas Jefferson held some very sane philosophical views for some utterly inadequate reasons, he might very well have been writing a comment on Mr. Lunn and "The Flight from Reason."

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